oh! BROTHER

Exchange between Michael Biernbaum and Nikki Craft

DATE: NOVEMBER 1, 1992
TO: NIKKI CRAFT
FROM: MICHAEL BIERNBAUM

Dear Nikki:

After reading through the material you sent me after working it through with Rick to that point, it was clear to me that what we have here are two bodies of writing: a letter that strongly criticizes the content of the magazine in various ways and presents demands; and an article whose information names and exposes the nature and networks of two primary pedophile organizations operating in the US and argues for action against them. We are clear that this is the form that is appropriate to the material and to the journal. I think the form and content of each work exceedingly well, will be understandable to the mass of our readership and useful to them as thinking, growing people. Each is clear in its own way to what it sets out to do.

Working with the material, as much as possible I have stayed faithful to the existing words and copy, though in some places I entered some possible but needed transitional or connecting type words. The letter runs some 1300 words (almost 1.5 pages in the journal) and the article some 2300 words (approaching 3 pages). Throughout I have applied the same editorial approach and criteria I would use with any other material: looking to keeping it principled, focused, the writing clear and of quality, non-redundant, true to its own energy, with minimal insinuation, slander, hate, character assassination and threat, and cleared by at least both major material review editors. Peter, Rick and myself are clear that we are not going to join in any witch-hunt or libelous conspiracy-building against *CM* or ourselves, while at the same time we support your right and that of others to criticize us and the magazine with anger, even rage in principled and well-grounded ways.

This is the writing space I have sought to create here, as with all the other material. This despite what we have variously felt as out of line pressure tactics, like bullying and implied threats to get special treatment for your material. Generally asking us to break with our review process and editorial forms. I'm not interested in working with you that way, so until I feel safe enough to work with you in person, I want to continue this editorial interaction via the mails, FAX and through the person of Sally Wagner as appropriate or if our communication breaks down.

I remain open to your comments, suggestions, changes - though I hope from the copy before you that you can understand what we are wanting and willing to present on the pages of the magazine - and repeat that I will continue to do all I can as one of the material review editors, and as the person I know myself to be, to get your material into this issue. I have worked to keep a space open even as the production process grinds on. My main criteria are that the material be useful, educational and well-grounded, helping me and that world of people out there to learn and grow, and worth reading.

What we have here is consistent with what Rick tells me he sought all along in response to

the material he was responding to and with what I spoke to you about us being able to accomodate in our first conversation-an article of some 2000-2500 words that would be reviewed like any other. That you presented Rick with a l 2,000 word article is your own responsibility. I hope you can hear me when I say that I want your opinions expressed. Your letter would be included in the "Criticism of Issue 24" section along with other critical and angry letters that are being published, but it will be the longest in our history and would be in addition to the article.

I await word back from you. **Nothing will be done without your approval.** I hope we can move this through quickly. We will be done with layout by the end of the week and off to the printer shortly thereafter. I hope that we can find ways to work together, ways that work for us all and for the general good. I also want to say that despite the criticisms I have voiced, I appreciate and respect you and your activism. *MB*

DATE: NOVEMBER 3, 1992
TO: RICK COTE, CHANGING MEN
FROM: NIKKI CRAFT

Dear Rick:

My good faith offer of openness to suggestions from Michael Biernbaum was not any invitation for him to rewrite, censor information from, and restructure my article so extensively. Furthermore, his refusal to speak to me has cut off any possibility of us working together. I cannot consider replacing the text that you and I have already agreed upon with his rewritten version.

Early on Biernbaum chose to remove himself from the editing loop. You have edited this article with scrupulous attention to Biernbaum's interest, as well as your magazine's interests. You know what we went through to get to this point. It was a grueling process with major compromises by both of us resulting in an article that meets at a halfway point from where we each really wanted it to be.

Rick, you have approved our version for publication if I followed certain stipulations. I have followed all those stipulations. It is completely unethical to now put me through another editing process with yet another editor. No magazine would do that. John Stoltenberg has rightly called it editing by double jeopardy. I want you to confirm and implement your backing on the piece that you and I came to an agreement on. *NC*